

Washington State Supreme Court justices easily re-elected

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Photo: Mike Urban, P-I File
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Justice Barbara Madsen, former Chief Justice, Washington State Supreme Court. She wins reelection with 63 percent of the vote.

Three Washington State Supreme Court justices won landslide re-election victories on Tuesday, with Justice Charlie Wiggins withstanding opponents' use of Willie Horton-style smear TV spots in an effort to beat him.

The high court has been under attack from the political right -- and from the state's technology billionaires -- for its charter school ruling, invalidating Tim Eyman initiatives, and requiring that the Legislature come up with a plan to fully fund K-12 education.

The response was a campaign that singled out Wiggins, a pillar of the Kitsan County bar before he upset Justice Richard Sanders six years ago.

Cable TV was filled with spots depicting Wiggins as a man who frees child pornographers to offend again. The spots were paid for, in part, by Seattle Mariners President John Stanton and Bellevue developer Kemper Freeman Jr.

The mud didn't stick. Wiggins won 58.31 percent of the vote in defeating Federal Way District Judge Dave Larsen.

He almost equaled the showing of court colleague Justice Mary Yu, who took 58.52 percent in defeating retired Gonzaga Law School professor David DeWolf.

The champion votegetter was former Chief Justice Barbara Madsen, who took 63.68 percent against Kitsap County Prosecutor Greg Zempel.

Under its *McCleary* ruling, the high court has given the Legislature until end of the session in 2017 to come up with a plan for full funding of K-12 education. It must be in place by the start of the 2018 school year.